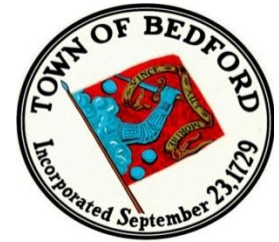


2014 Economic Development Update

In 2014, the Town of Bedford hired its first Economic Development Coordinator, Alyssa Sandoval, to devise strategies to help Bedford retain and attract businesses and enhance its existing business districts. 2014 has been a great year for Bedford! Let's step back and reflect on some of the highlights.



Sample of New Businesses locating to Bedford in 2014 with Industry Noted:

- Aspen Technology, 400 employees. *High-tech*
- Bedford Research Foundation. *Biotech*
- Conagen, 20 employees. *Biotech*
- CucinaD Restaurant. *Restaurant*
- EDCO Collaborative. *Education*
- Entegris, 100 employees. *Advanced Manufacturing*
- Formulatrix, 20 employees. *Biotech*
- Salem Five Savings Bank. *Bank*
- S4 Inc. *Defense and Security*

News on Tax Rates: Overall economic growth in Bedford in 2014 resulted in a 5.6% decrease in the property tax rate for commercial and industrial properties from \$34.04 in FY2014 to \$32.12 in FY2015.

Reaching Out to the Business Community

To gain a better understanding of the current companies in Bedford and their goals and concerns, Alyssa Sandoval organized meetings to identify issues to work on and collaborate with companies and property owners in Bedford including:

- One on one meetings with companies and small businesses, such as Counterpoint Health Solutions
- Larger “neighborhood” meetings
 - Meetings on June 10, 2014 and November 4, 2014 with Wiggins Avenue companies and a business park owner
 - Meetings on September 18, 2014, November 24, 2014, and December 3, 2014 with Crosby Drive companies and business park owners.
 - Some businesses have noted the need for better Town to Business communication
 - Some businesses along Wiggins Avenue would like to see improved pedestrian facilities for their companies’ employees



November 4, 2014 Meeting with Companies on Wiggins Avenue
Chris Conway Director of Facilities at Anika Therapeutics, Bruce Lee, from Lee Partners review Wiggins Avenue maps provided by Adrienne St. John, Bedford Town Engineer

- Another meeting with Wiggins Avenue companies will be set up for February 2015 to review shuttle service expansion and improving pedestrian connections from Wiggins to Great Road restaurants and amenities

Positive outcomes from business outreach:

- Improved Town to business communication – regular email notifications and meetings to identify issues and work collaboratively
- Collaboration with property owners on median landscape improvements on Crosby Drive
- New commuter shuttle service launched to Crosby Drive




CROSBY DRIVE SHUTTLE TO MITRE

Marketing and Promotion

Website: To enhance Bedford's business profile, there is now a new Economic Development website on the Town's website <http://www.bedfordma.gov/economic-development>. An important message the website sends to the business community is that the Town is "business-friendly." The website provides a number of resources that developed specifically for prospective businesses including:

- A comprehensive list of available commercial/industrial properties for lease/sale
- Industrial district maps with key companies to highlight Bedford's industrial districts
- Business resources such as grants and tax incentives, and,
- Relevant business permits and licenses checklist

Twitter: As of September 2014, there is a new Twitter page to highlight and promote Bedford businesses – follow me @BedfordMABiz ! 

Economic Impact Award: As part of the strategy to raise the profile of Bedford companies, Bedford nominated Entegris for the annual state-wide Economic Impact Awards through MassECON for the new i2m Center on Crosby Drive. The company was awarded a Bronze-level award and Alyssa Sandoval attended the high-profile awards ceremony in Boston on November 25, 2014 to represent Bedford. More information on Entegris' new innovation center here: [New i2m Center in Bedford, MA.](#)



BRONZE WINNER IS ENTEGRIS
Fred Mulligan and Susan Houston (MassECON) and Bill Shaner (Entegris) from left to right.
Economic Impact Awards Ceremony, November 25, 2014. Photo Credit: Janet Stearns.

Wayfinding/Branding of Bedford Town Center

While the Town of Bedford has a rich cultural heritage and is home to a wide array of cultural and historical resources clustered in Town Center, residents and visitors may have little knowledge of these resources. As part of outreach to businesses and residents in Bedford Center, Alyssa Sandoval has heard that the Center lacks of cohesion and visibility. One way that Bedford can better unify and brand its Town Center is through wayfinding features to aid visitors and residents in locating cultural resources and historic sites, restaurants, stores and other amenities, including parking in Bedford's Town Center. To jumpstart this effort, the Town applied for a grant through the state's Downtown Technical Assistance Program for a \$10,000 wayfinding study. A study group comprised of business owners, Bedford Chamber members, members of the Town's cultural organizations, and Town staff will be formed to support and guide this effort.

Middlesex 3 Coalition Coordination/Shuttle Service Efforts

As already noted briefly, Alyssa Sandoval is currently working closely with Middlesex 3 Coalition to expand commuter shuttle service for employees to the Crosby Drive, Middlesex Turnpike and Burlington Road area. She organized several meetings with large property owners, MITRE, the Davis Company (Bedford Business Park), and National Development (Crosby Corporate Center). In addition, the Rev shuttle currently has a stop on Wiggins Avenue and Alyssa Sandoval has been working with companies to take advantage of this service so that more companies may be served along this route.

Existing Businesses Database

Part of developing an overall economic development strategy is having a good understanding of the current businesses in Bedford. With technical assistance ably provided by Public Works GIS Analyst Chris Nelson, Alyssa Sandoval developed an innovative GIS-based business database. The database is also directly linked to current permit information through Code Enforcement. The database can be used to identify company type clusters, business contact information, permit information, send out information and keep track of company communications. The database currently has over 600 entries, and is continuously updated.

Permitting Coordination

Alyssa Sandoval has held several pre-permitting coordination meetings with companies and prospective developers of commercial and industrial properties in Bedford. Working closely with Town departments, she created a checklist of relevant permits and licenses with department contact information and approximate timelines to provide better transparency and ease to the permitting process for prospective businesses and developers. It has been helpful to use as a general guide in pre-permitting meetings. The worksheet is located on the Town's website is hyper-linked to Town department and permit applications

http://www.bedfordma.gov/sites/bedfordma/files/u231/checklist_of_relevant_commercial_licenses_and_permits.pdf.

Economic Development Strategy/Future Initiatives

- Continue to work with Middlesex 3 Coalition on marketing, events, transportation, business development, and infrastructure opportunities
- Establish study group for wayfinding initiative for Town Center
- Explore available state grant funding, such as MassWorks, for Great Road Master Plan planning and implementation.
- In coordination with the Planning Department, review and provide input for industrial and commercial zoning revisions to enhance industrial & commercial areas and incentivize attractive redevelopment of out-of-date properties. Work with Middlesex 3 Coalition, commercial brokers and developers to gather business input on potential zoning changes
- Continue engagement with companies and businesses in the areas of Crosby Drive, Middlesex Turnpike, Great Road, Wiggins, and South Road/DeAngelo Drive.
- Connect Middlesex Community College and UMass Lowell with Bedford companies regarding relevant workforce training opportunities, internships, and lab space resources
- Develop relationship with MassBio for biotech company recruitment

Small Business Initiatives

- Develop a “How to Open a Business in Bedford” guide targeted to small businesses wishing to locate/expand in Bedford and post on the Town website
- Begin outreach to Bedford retailers and organize a retail makeover workshop open to area businesses with the Middlesex 3 Coalition
- Continue to work collaboratively with Chamber to support and enhance small business success in Bedford

Promotion and Marketing

- Develop company highlights marketing brochure of 6 innovative Bedford companies to use for marketing and business recruitment
- To attract new businesses, market Bedford’s commercial/industrial neighborhoods and assist with “branding” of industrial and commercial areas, e.g. Crosby Drive; the Depot District; and Great Road
- Explore visitor/cultural resources in Bedford and highlight these resources on the Economic Development website. Potentially join the Greater Merrimack Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Identify events and opportunities to highlight individual Bedford businesses and their achievements